

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 16766 161744Z

53

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

IO-10 AID-05 ACDA-05 /090 W
----- 056835

R 161238Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TOSRUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2851

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USLO PEKING

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

USIA WASHDC

USCINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 211652: NA

TAGS: PFOR, BG, IN

SUBJ: BANGLADESH - INDIAN PRESS COVERAGE GENERALLY
FAVORABLE, AND SCANT

REF: NEW DELHI 16407

1. A FURTHER SAMPLING OF INDIAN EDITORIAL COMMENT
FOLLOWING THE INDO-BANGLADESH TALKS (TEFTEL) INDICATES
A HOPEFUL IF CAUTIOUS LINE. THE HINDUSTAN TIMES FOUND
THE TALKS USEFUL, AND HOPED THE RESPECTIVE HIGH COM-
MISSIONERS COULD FILL THE GAPS NOW THAT THE GROUND HAS
BEEN CLEARED. THE STATESMAN URGED DACCA TO ENSURE THAOH
PREVAILING UNCERTAINTY IS NOT COMPOUNDED BY COMMUNAL
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PAGE 02 NEW DE 16766 161744Z

INSECURITY, ADDING THAT NEITHER SIDE HAD CLOSED THE

DOOR TO A RENEWAL OF MUTUAL TRUST. THE INDIAN EXPRESS ASSERTED THE ASSURANCES GIVEN BY THE INDIAN SIDE REGARDING BANGLADESH'S SOVEREIGNTY MAY HELP COUNTERACT THE OBSTREPEROUS ELEMENTS IN DACCA WHICH HAVE BEEN FANNING A HATE-INDIA CAMPAIGN.

2. BANGLADESH WAS BACK ON THE FRONT PAGES OF THE WEEK-END EDITIONS, BUT ONLY INDIRECTLY AS THE PRESS GAVE PROMINENT COVERAGE TO THE MEA'S REFUTATION OF PAKISTANI MEDIA CLAIMS THAT INDIA WAS MASSING TROOPS ON ITS BORDERS WITH PAKISTAN AND BANGLADESH. THE APPOINMENT OF THE PAKISTANI AMBASSADOR TO BANGLADESH, AND THE NAMING OF HIS COUNTERPART IN DACCA, RECEIVED BRIEF FACTUAL COVERAGE ON THE INSIDE PAGES.

3. PRESIDENT SAYEM'S NATIONAL DAY MESSAGE WAS CARRIED IN VARIED FORMS, MOST OF THE COVERAGE BRIEF AND AGAIN ON THE INSIDE PAGES. THE COVERAGE STRESSED SAYEM'S COMMITMENT TO FREE ELECTIONS AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FRIENDLY RELATIONS IN THE REGION OF SOUTH ASIA. PRE-SIDENT AHMED'S GREETINGS TO SAYEM ON BANGLADESH NATIONAL DAY WERE CARRIED IN FULL IN MOST PAPERS. LAST YEAR PRIME MINISTER GANDHI ALSO SENT GREETINGS. APPARENTLY SHE DID NOT DO SO THIS YEAR. AHMED'S MESSAGE THIS YEAR IS ONLY marginally LESS CORDIAL THAN LAST YEARS.

4. THE DEPARTURE OF THE BANGLADESH FOREIGN SECRETARY, TABRAK HUSSAIN, FOR A TWO-DAY MOSCOW TRIP WAS NOTED IN THE CAPITAL PRESS.

5. ALL-INDIA RADIO NEWS COVERAGE THIS WEEK WAS VERY BRIEF, THE ONLY ITEM UP TO DECEMBER 15 WAS THE DENIAL OF THE REPORT OF INDIAN TROOPS MASSING ON THE PAKISTANI AND BANGLADESH BORDERS.

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